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A Christmas lighting

Mayor of Algonquin Highlands Liz Danielsen posed for a photo with Sparky and Santa at the Dorset Tree Lighting ceremony on Sunday, Dec. 1. /Submitted by the Township of Algonquin Highlands

Point in Time sees rise in substance abuse

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

Children and youth can realize their potential with caring and responsive families and communities.

And Haliburton County council heard during its Nov. 27 meeting that’s something the Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth, and Parents organization strives to make a reality. It’s a non-profit charitable organization that works with other community groups and businesses to provide food and transportation to young people and families.

The organization is comprised of 33 staff members and a dozen volunteer board members who run initiatives like Food for Kids, Artists in the School and Community, and Food Net.

Marg Cox, the group’s executive director, said they identify needs and provides supports and services that enables Haliburton County residents function at their highest potential.

“We value our staff,” Cox said. “We know they’re one of our most important assets and how good they feel in their job has a direct impact on how well they’re able to do their job.”

They’re committed to the community. They help people clinically when they are most in need. But they also believe in prevention and early intervention, she said.

As illustrated in their strategic plan, Point in Time is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion across all population groups.

“Point in Time is committed to applying a trauma-informed approach to service through understanding the impacts trauma has had on individuals seeking support,” she said. “We try and use a strength-based approach.”

With a \$3 million budget, Cox said much of that coin goes back into Haliburton County through employment and other economic spinoffs.

The group provided services to 2,123 children and youth in 2023-24.

Mental health affects how somebody thinks, feels, and acts. It includes emotional and psychological wellbeing and holds sway in how we handle stress, relate to other people, and make healthy choices.

Mental health is a continuum, she said.

“On one side of the continuum would be struggling and the next one is thriving,” she said. “And we’re all somewhere in between every day. We’re impacted by a whole bunch of different factors.”

Those include poverty, stress, genetics, attachments, and external pressures.

“If there’s things we can do to prevent people from actually needing additional services, we’re committed to doing them,” Cox said. “It’s not always how the funding works, though.”

Sometimes, funding covers only the treatment portion of mental health and wellbeing needs. She said that money would often be best spent at the front-end of promotion and prevention.

An increase in substance abuse has been observed, she said, with youth often identifying substances as one of the things going on in their lives but often not the presenting issue.

That increase drives the need for a harm reduction approach. The front-end approach of promotion and prevention.

“Things are never just one thing,” Cox said. “It’s complex, as I’ve talked about. People living in poverty without

see STAFF page 2



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Social services reduce drug deaths in county

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

There is much data that paints a picture of the drug poisoning crisis in communities under the umbrella of the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Public Health unit.

But those dry figures, the impersonal numbers belie a crucial facet of the crisis, said Kate Hall, the unit’s public health promoter.

“Behind the data are our people, our loved ones, our friends, our families,” she said during Haliburton County council’s Nov. 27 meeting.

The drug poisoning crisis is a complex community health issue fuelled by synthetic opioids, Hall said. It’s impacts affect the drug users themselves, their families and friends, and the whole community.

“The drug poisoning crisis is characterized by unprecedented deaths from an unregulated drug supply that’s becoming increasingly unpredictable and more and more toxic,” Hall said.

Fentanyl was involved in most deaths, often mixed with stimulants.

Vidya Sunil, an epidemiologist with the public health unit, said the Haliburton-Kawartha-Pine Ridge area had a greater hospitalization rate for drug poisoning than the rest of Ontario in 2023.

The most deaths in the health unit’s region was seen in 2021 with 50 fatalities. Of those, eight were in Haliburton County. Last year, there were 36 deaths in the region with none in Haliburton County.

Between 2018-23, opioid-related deaths

rose with a total of 205 drug poisoning fatalities. Fentanyl was present in 86 per cent of those opioid-related deaths in the Haliburton-Kawartha-Pine Ridge area in 2023 alone.

Sunil said there’s an overdose information dashboard on the public health unit’s website.

Hall said a four-pillar approach has been adopted to meet the recent spike in drug poisoning incidents in Haliburton County, Northumberland County, and the City of Kawartha Lakes.

The four-pillar approach to addressing the drug poisoning crisis has gained credibility by public health agencies throughout Ontario. Those pillars are prevention, treatment and recovery, harm reduction, and community safety.

Integrated comprehensive treatment programs are required to effectively meet the crisis. That includes social services connections with all levels of health care professions.

Hall likened that to an “all of society approach” to the crisis.

“Investment in programs that support families and address youth mental health are critical to reduce the risk of substance use disorders in adulthood,” Hall said.

To that end, youth wellness hubs have proven effective.

Of people surveyed with drug use experience, the most common method to ingest drugs was smoking. The relative few who indicated injection as the favour means of ingestion, more than two thirds reported that they have reused injection equipment in the last six months.

The stimulant of choice is crystal meth,

while the more favoured depressant was indicated to be fentanyl.

Regarding identified local needs, 71 per cent of users surveyed indicated the greatest community support strategy would be having a safe place to live. Most wanted drug testing kits to increase harm reduction from drug use.

Dane Record, executive director of the Peterborough AIDS Resource Network, said substance use is a public health issue in all

areas, all communities. A number of policing organizations have been working toward the decriminalization of drug use, having recognized it could be a mental health issue.

There are some police agencies that have a mental health nurse that accompanies officers responding to drug-related or mental health related crisis situations. A friendly face connecting with people at the time of incident using a softer handed approach can be effective.

Snow way to go but up

Haliburton County was blasted with the first snow storm of the season this past weekend, with nearly 70 centimetres accumulating across the region. The townships of Minden Hills and Algonquin Highlands each declared a significant weather event, which resulted in all municipal buildings and properties being closed until the storm

had passed. The declarations were lifted on Monday, Dec. 2. According to Environment Canada weather reports, the squalls have shifted southeast, and with a cold snap settling in, the snow will likely stay put for the next few weeks.

Staff



Snow birds
Minden received around 26 inches of snow over the weekend. The birds are going to find it difficult to grab a snack now...
/Photo by Guenter Horst

A Special Note to our valued subscribers *Canada Post strike*

We are making adjustments to how you can access your paper(s).

During the strike the Echo will continue to operate and print as always.

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1. **Email** subscriptions@haliburtonpress.com and we will send you a digital copy of the Times during the strike.
2. **Purchase** a paper at any local newspaper dealer in town.
3. **Stop by the Times office** 2 IGA Rd., Unit 2 Minden, **Wednesday, 9am - 1pm** and pick up your paper at no cost to you.

In the event that the strike lasts longer than two weeks, we will extend your subscription by one month.



Staff retention a challenge

from page 1

transportation. Fuel costs.

“It really drives the need for a harm reduction approach and many recipients currently present with complex need requiring of live-in treatment which is beyond our current capacity as an organization.”

Councillor Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills, applauded Point in Time’s direction toward prevention.

“All too often we wait for a problem to get to a stage where it needs treatment and then, sometimes, it’s not recoverable,” he said.

He said many facets of the social services have a chore to attract and retain staff

members.

Cox said the COVID-19 pandemic has caused people to re-evaluate their lives.

“We’ve really tried to do everything we can to make Point in Time a great place to work,” she said. “Try to provide a lot of flexibility and supports. At the same time, it’s challenging.”

She said the group recently recruited another member of their clinical team and posted a maternity leave position.

“Other than that, right now at this particular time, we’re good,” Cox said. “What we have seen is that’s gone up and down a lot.”

She acknowledged that there is fluidity in staff recruitment across the county.

Minden Canadian Tire to change hands

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

"I just figured it was time for my career to be over," says Terry Gregorini.

After working for TD Canada Bank for twenty years, Gregorini became owner of his first Canadian Tire in Trail, British Columbia, then Exeter, Ontario. Gregorini became the owner of Minden Canadian Tire in 2007.

"I've loved it," says Gregorini.

Gregorini says that the staff that he has worked with at the Canadian Tire in Minden have become like family to him.

"That is what I will miss, the staff and the customers," says Gregorini.

The new owner of the Canadian Tire will be Scott English. The Minden Canadian Tire location will be the fifth Canadian Tire that English has owned and operated.

"I'm pretty excited," says Gregorini. "I know Scott. I know that the store is getting a great dealer. I think he will make significant improvements to the store. I'll certainly miss seeing the customers on a day-to-day basis."

English is no stranger to Canadian Tire, having started working as a part-time parts clerk in 1984.

The Minden location for their Canadian Tire has brought unique challenges to Gregorini. When the building was first built, the business was only expected to last four or five years at its location, says Gregorini.

"Initially, it was a lot of hard work, but your time gets more manageable," says Gregorini. "You control what you buy. It is a smaller store, so you can't carry everything."

It is a profitable location and the community is nice, assures Gregorini.

"I was offered lots of other stores over the years, but I love it here," says Gregorini. "They built the store a lot smaller and the amount of sales is significantly more than they thought it was going to be."

Gregorini says the location's success is due to the patronage of the local community and the increased flux of sales during the summer of vacationers and cottagers. Summer sees an influx of barbecue, patio furniture, and kayak purchases.

English has accepted the store and the change of ownership will take place on Feb. 26. The final sale will be processed two or three months after.

Gregorini and his wife will be welcoming their first grandchild next month. The pair also intend to spend their time off travelling.

Gregorini says that electronic shelving labels will be coming to the store.

"This is a significant improvement for customers," With the pice of items changing frequently, updated prices can be displayed. The current system of using labels is outdated.

"It is a lot of work for the staff."

The Canadian Tire will also be improving their overhanging storage area. When the winter comes, the store is forced

to send items into storage for the winter season. In-house storage will improve their space and save money on storage costs. English says that insulating the canopy is one of their first goals. He also says that the Canadian Tire will be receiving a face-lift and a new coat of paint. Both the interior and exterior of the store will be painted.

"It will have a totally different appearance of the store when we are all done," assures English.

English's family had a long-time family cottage in the Bracebridge area. They have always desired to own their cottage in cottage country.

When the opportunity to own the Minden Canadian Tire struck this year, English and his partner jumped at the opportunity to live in the beautiful county of the Haliburton Highlands.

Currently, they are actively looking for their dream house alongside a lake in Haliburton County.

After coming to the Canadian Tire, English wants input from the community on what they want the store to look like, stock, and anything they can improve upon.

"The community needs the store," says English. "As an operator, I need the community."

English says he has already visited the Minden location four times and is eager to join the community. After working at a Canadian Tire near Algonquin Park, English says that he has experienced the joys of small town life and is excited to work in the atmosphere that Minden offers.



Faces filled with joy and cheer

Dorset residents joined members of Algonquin Highlands council and Santa Claus himself for a festive tree-lighting celebration in Lions Centennial Park on the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 1. The event included hot chocolate and carols in addition to the lighting of the tree. /Submitted by the Township of Algonquin Highlands

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A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minden Hills Fire Association presents the 3rd Annual Christmas Food and Toy Drive. Visit Minden Hills Firefighters at Canadian Tire from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm on December 8th where they will be collecting donations. Fire trucks will be driving around downtown streets collecting donations from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Please be advised that tax and water/wastewater accounts will still need to be paid during a postal strike. Available payment methods include in-person cash and debit, online or telephone banking, and payment from your financial institution. Please visit our website for more details.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person and with electronic participation. Meetings begin at 9:00 am unless otherwise noted. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

• December 13 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link on the Township CivicWeb Portal.

WINTER PARKING

From Nov 1st to Apr 30th overnight parking is illegal from midnight to 8:00 AM on township roadways and parking lots. Parking in the turning circle of a cul-de-sac is prohibited during all hours. Vehicles parked in areas that interfere with snow removal will be towed away and/or ticketed at the owner's expense.

SAFE WINTER DRIVING

Drive according to weather conditions - posted speed limits are usually too fast. Adjust your speed and give yourself extra travel time. Be visible! Low-beam headlights are brighter than daytime running lights and they will turn on your taillights.



MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

- Beginning on Thursday, December 5 the Agnes Jamieson Gallery will be displaying a selection of artwork from our permanent collection, featuring André Lapine (1866-1952) as well as new acquisitions. The Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm. Admission is by donation. We will be closed December 23 to January 1, 2025 for the holidays.
- The MHCC and the HCPL-Minden Branch are offering a free screening on December 5 at 1 pm of *Malartic* (2024), a documentary by filmmaker Nicolas Paquet. Admission is free. No pre-registration is required..
- The UFO Craft Group is meeting in December on Friday the 6th and 20th from 1pm to 3pm.

For more information on all the programs and exhibits email culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.



Iconic floating bridge returns for snowmobilers

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

It is that time of year when the groomers are hitting the trails and cleaning everything up for the snowmobilers. The iconic B112 floating bridge has been placed across the Gull River in Minden, despite the low water levels.

"It was around 2009," said HCSA President Neil Vanderstoop regarding the installation of the B112 Floating Bridge in Minden. "It was a joint purchase between Minden and the Snowmobile Association."

The Haliburton County Snowmobile Association is a volunteer-owned and volunteer-managed not-for-profit organization. The HCSA started in 1971 after the Chamber of Commerce discussed opportunities to attract visitors in the wintertime.

In addition to providing a safe crossing for sledders during the wintertime, the floating bridge also acts as a dock for Minden Hills during the summer months.

"You had to sled through town before," says Vanderstoop. "Now it is through the graveyard, and behind the funeral home, across the bridge, and then you're off into the woods."

"We are constantly trying to improve and make things better," says Vanderstoop. Rerouting their trails are one of the highest things on their list of priorities.

A post on the HCSA's Facebook page currently has 35,000 hits from all over the states and Canada, proving it's worth as a winter-time tourist destination for the Highlands.

The B112 Floating Bridge is one of two floating bridges that the HCSA uses across their trails. The other bridge, near Partridge Lake, is located through remote woods and is primarily only seen by snowmobilers.

Currently the HCSA is hard at work to ensure that all of their landowners sign permission forms and meet guidelines for snowmobilers using their land.

"This year, we are trying to maintain the status quo," says Vanderstoop. "Everything has to be registered, insured, and signed up."

Vanderstoop is going to make sure all of the landowners have dotted their i's and crossed their t's. Some landowners do not live in Canada, proving a challenge to the HCSA volunteers tracking them down. They will not stop until the club has 100 per cent of the necessary forms, permissions, and clear-



The HCSA has reminded the public that the floating bridge is not for pedestrians. They are asked to please cross the bridge along Bobcaygeon Road. /Submitted

ance to use land for their trails.

"I am jealous of the clubs that can shut down in July and August," says Vanderstoop. "We can't."

On Thursday, Nov. 28, the HCSA visited Minden Hills council to discuss the economic impact the HCSA has on their community and their desires for them to continue their land use memorandum.

Vanderstoop provided an update saying that Minden has been their hardest fought battle in keeping their trails open, to keep them growing, and also requested that any help offered by the town would be appreciated.

"We are part of Ontario's six million dollar industry of outdoor experience that generates millions of dollars in the Haliburton area," says Vanderstoop.

Every five years, the clubs tries to provide a snapshot of activity. There are currently 200 people involved with making the trails work this year.

"We have 370 kilometres of trails connecting communities, drawing snowmobiles to Haliburton and their dollars."

Vanderstoop also says that \$1.3 million is spent in this area at restaurants on food.

"In order for this to continue, the [HCSA] asks for your approval and the land use memorandum," says Vanderstoop. "Minden is a gateway and there is so much to see on this trail in this township. There is a viewable vista at every turn. You know the area is home to many industries and [that is] thanks to snowmobiling."

Vanderstoop also reminded MH council that they have asked to name the floating bridge after two founding members of the snowmobile club, Bob and Gwen Bryant.

"People love to sit there and get their pictures taken on the little floater," says Vanderstoop. "The true heroes in HCSA land are the landowners who allow snowmobiling on their property with no compensation be-

cause they want to help out Minden."

The purpose of his presentation was to remind council of what the HCSA is all about.

The Administration Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) was passed, allowing Haliburton County Snowmobile Association and Happy Wanderers Snowmobile Club to continue to operate snowmobile trails.

The HCSA is very grateful to Minden Hills Public Works for installation, removal and storage of the boom and railings during the off season.

Snowmobiling permits from the HCSA can be purchased now and are available through their website hcsa.ca. They are also actively looking for any volunteers interested in donating their valuable time to keep the trails in Haliburton County beautiful.

The Haliburton County Snowmobile Association also has an Instagram account and Facebook page that is frequently updated with information.

Canadian Tire Gas+ receives facelift, rebranding

The Canadian Tire Gas+ station in Minden will be rebranding as Petro-Canada. "Through this new partnership, Canadian Tire Corporation will expand the reach of our Triangle Rewards program from over 200 gas stations to a network of more than 1,800, driving enhanced value for Canadians at the pumps by providing more opportunities for members to earn CT Money in a high-frequency category," said Greg Hicks, CEO and president of Canadian Tire Corporation in the company's press release. /THOMAS SMITH Staff



Council requests blue-green algae messaging

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

The COVID-19 pandemic brought public health into the spotlight and elevated it to the forefront of everybody's minds.

But those people aren't necessarily familiar with the entire scope of what the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Public Health Unit does, said Dr. Natalie Bocking.

Haliburton County council heard Nov. 27 how public health work is grounded in a "population health" approach. It's focused on upstream efforts to promote health and prevent diseases to improve the health of populations and the differences in health between groups, said Bocking, the unit's medical officer of health.

"We in some ways have an infinite mandate," she said. "I talk about our work as focusing on 4Ps."

Those are protection against disease and health hazards, prevention of illness and disease, promotion of wellbeing, and at a population level.

The unit's upstream concerns are the social determinants of health, healthy behaviours, healthy communities, and an assessment of a population's health.

"We take a life-course approach," Bocking said. "Our focus is on keeping well at a community level."

That community is comprised of about 188,000 people throughout the region that's under the umbrella of the health unit. Of its 176 staff members, 13 of them are in the office that serves Haliburton County in a myriad of health disciplines.

"We have a large team of very diverse professionals," Bocking said.

Some of the public health issues that have taken the spotlight in the HKPR region include the impacts of climate change on health, new and re-emerging infectious diseases, and the current drug poisoning crisis.

"With all of our programs and services, we do have the opportunity to tailor it to meet local needs with a particular focus on health equity," she said.

One such local need in the county is maintaining the health and integrity of its lakes and streams.

Councillor Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills, said there

are many bodies of water in the county and, with climate and weather change, there's been a rapid increase of blue-green algae blooms.

That algae, called cyanobacteria, can be harmful to humans and animals. Exposure to high levels of it can cause diarrhea and vomiting; skin, eye, and throat irritation; and breathing difficulties. Pets and livestock could die because of it.

"Many of the people associated with the lakes are looking for the health unit to take a more proactive approach to alerting people once one of these blooms has been recognized," Carter said. "We have lots of people here who still take their water from the lakes and, as you know, most normal treatments will not handle blue-green algae."

Spreading awareness of those algae blooms is something that should be within the health unit's purview, he said.

Bocking said she'll bring that concern to the unit's environmental health managers. They meet regularly with Haliburton County staff and people with the Ministry of Environment.

She said there's a need for more coordinated communications. "It does always become challenging when it's a multi-insti-

tution response," she said. "Our communication protocol, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, has largely relied on the Ministry of Environment related to that."

Warden Liz Danielsen, who is the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, said blue-green algae is a major issue in her township.

"We really would appreciate your looking into that and seeing if we can improve communications streams," Danielsen said.

“Many of the people associated with the lakes are looking for the health unit to take a more proactive approach to alerting people once one of these blooms has been recognized

— BOB CARTER, MAYOR OF MINDEN HILLS



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Shovels ready

I HAVE finally received a winter's welcome while working for the *Minden Times*. When I first began in January of this year, the winter was already petering off. I can only remember one day in which I was sliding around our driveway.

This past weekend, I saw cars slipping and sliding around on both Highway 35 and Bobcaygeon Road.

Clearly, people were not expecting an expedited greeting by the Snow Miser.

Personally, I was not expecting it either.

Highway 11 was closed this weekend. States of emergency were declared in Algonquin Highlands and Minden Hills. In a submitted press release, the OPP stated that roads were closed and impassable, especially the stretch of highway between Highway 60 in Huntsville and West Street in Orillia. OPP, paramedics, and first responders were forced to use snowmobiles and off-road vehicles to check on stranded motorists. Many of those people were forced to go to the Gravenhurst Centennial Centre to keep warm.

"We understand it can be challenging to find fuel in the area as many gas stations have been impacted by ongoing power outages or potential supply issues as a result of the snow. If you are low on fuel, and still moving, seriously consider finding a safe place to park until you are able to safely get to a gas station or someone can bring fuel to you," stated their release. "Anyone who finds themselves stranded is advised to stay with their vehicle and not venture out on foot. Pedestrians could become lost or face hazards posed by snow removal equipment."

On Monday around 10 p.m. Highway 11 was reopened for south-

bound traffic.

While I did not have to drive between Highway 11 this weekend, I have one piece of advice for everyone: don't try to buy a car on the weekend of a snowstorm.

My car does not have heat, making it rather difficult to drive when your windshield is a sheet of ice. Whenever I plugged in a defroster in the cigarette lighter, I blew a fuse (yes, I have a bulk box of fuses on-hand).

Finally, I have been able to find a car (with heat) while I put the 'Green Goblin' (as I affectionately call her) away for the winter.

After I had purchased the vehicle on Friday night, I made the mistake of leaving the vehicle in the parking lot in which I had purchased it.

After the 26 plus inches of snowfall on Saturday and Sunday, only its trunk was visible when we went over to collect it on Sunday..



THOMAS SMITH
Editor

Fortunately, my brother was gullible enough to assist with my retrieval of the car.

Unfortunately, we only had one good shovel and one shovel that looked like it was made for sand castles at the beach.

Guess which shovel I got.

I was 'brave' (stupid) enough to think that I could attempt this rescue mission in my jeans.

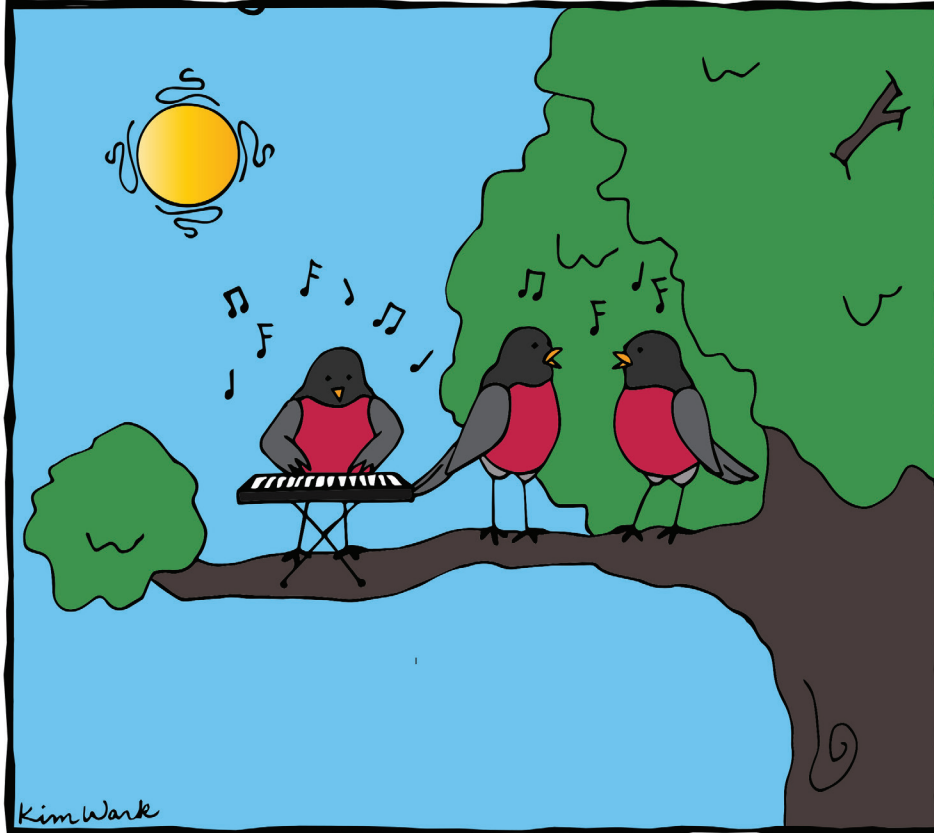
It did not take long for my jeans to become solid blocks of ice.

We were finally able to dig a tunnel to the driver's door.

With my teeth chattering, the heat kicked on in an instant and we were able to reverse through the snowbank that had amassed around the car.

The moral of this story is: if you purchase a new car at the beginning of December, make sure you have your shovel ready.

Kwarky



"He's non-verbal."

Under where?

NOW THAT we have 36 feet of snow – more or less – in some parts of the province, I think it is high time for every outdoors enthusiast to take stock of their supply of winter underwear.

Mostly, this comprises of long johns or, what people my height call extra-long johns.

Finding them is more of a challenge than most people think. In fact, for me at least, it often becomes my main winter activity.

That's because, if you are like me, you have put your winter underwear away

somewhere around last March. Where that is, is anyone's guess.

So, about this time every year, most forward-thinking outdoors enthusiasts begin what is akin to a search for buried treasure.

First, we check the bottom drawers for, ironically enough, our bottom drawers. Of course, finding them there would be much too simple and hardly sporting.

In my experience, they are never there, but there are always clues.

This year it was the single wool sock.

This allowed me to deduce that the other one is obviously still stuffed in the bottom of my missing pair of long johns. So, now I know all I need to do is find that other sock and I have found the long johns.

Experience has taught me that lost socks are often at the bottom of the laundry hamper.

So that is the next obvious place to look.

If you are lucky, they won't be there.

The next place to look is perhaps the most dangerous. I'm speaking of your partner's underwear drawer. This is logical because, for a couple, long underwear

is like a time-share, which is to say the women get them in the winter months.

But rifling through your wife's underwear drawer is dangerous and, should you get caught, more than little difficult to explain. The other danger for men is that you might see your long johns and not be able to recognize them. Mostly because, no man has ever seen a pair of long johns neatly folded up before. Or smelling like lavender.

Failing success there, my search often takes me to the outer reaches of our territory. I'm talking about the deepest, darkest

recesses of the spare closet, where all the bins full of the winter clothes Jenn put away last spring reside. In places like this, you need to move quietly and not make any sudden sounds lest you precipitate a landslide of winter clothing. If you get caught in one of these, they likely won't find you till next spring, when they are putting away your long johns once again.

The way to avoid all this is to go to the store and buy a new pair of long johns and, if you don't want to go through this again, a tracking device. The danger here is that it might get hacked and, just like that, the location of your secret ice fishing spot is all over the internet.

Regardless, after you come home and try on your new long underwear, the best idea is not only to find a storage location that you will never forget, but also a place where your partner will never look. For instance, Jenn doesn't seem to like any place that is messy, a little dirty, and highly disorganized.

Hang on! I forgot to check my underwear drawer ...



STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Some thoughts on Echo Chambers

THE TERM “echo chamber” has been thrown around a lot online and in the media lately, often in response to online disagreements where one person has disagreed with another and neither have managed to come to any agreement. Often these disagreements are centred around politics and human rights issues, which are big, complex, and difficult subjects.

An echo chamber, literally speaking, is a hollow space where sound can bounce off the interior to create a reverberation. Acoustic echo chambers make for great sounding music (the kind of sound you get in churches, music halls, and your shower). An echo chamber, figuratively speaking, is a virtual space in which only one set of ideas or opinions is allowed to circulate at the exclusion of rebuttal or contradiction, potentially resulting in confirmation bias.

Confirmation bias is an error where, in testing a hypothesis, evidence which supports the hypothesis is accepted, while evidence that does not support the hypothesis is rejected. All humans are susceptible to confirmation bias. Because of this, people who work in fields where objectivity is important, such as science and journalism, are trained to actively guard against confirmation bias in the course of their work.



ERIN KERNOHAN-BERNING
Humans and Technology

Because social media is a very new iteration of the World Wide Web, research on echo chambers is in its infancy. There is disagreement on what constitutes an echo chamber on social media or even what kind of real-world consequences such echo chambers might have. In public discourse, the worry with echo chambers is that by providing personal moderation tools for people to filter and block certain users and commentary, social media platforms are creating an environment uniquely primed for confirmation bias – for people to tailor their social media feeds so that they only have to hear what they want to hear.

One issue with this commentary is that it neglects to acknowledge how little agency users have when it comes to algorithmic social media feeds. Most social media algorithms push content that has high engagement to the surface, regardless of how that engagement happens. Content that fuels discord usually has very high engagement and is rewarded by reaching more devices, eyes, and brains. This sets up a situation where there’s an incentive for people to behave poorly online, and the only recourse a person has to avoid such behaviour is to employ the aforementioned personal moderation tools.

Echo chamber discourse also doesn’t take into account the fallacy of false equivalence. This fallacy assumes that in any particular argument there are two equally supported perspectives. However, in many cases this is not true. For instance, there is plenty of evidence to support that the world is round, but no evidence supporting that the world is flat. However, according to the echo chamber discourse in our current online moment, treating all arguments as equal regardless of factual merit is considered a virtue, and people declaring the world is flat should get equal airtime to belabour that.

In a white paper commissioned by the Knight Foundation, the authors argue that even if people seek out content on social media that fits in their worldview, we are still regularly exposed to opposing viewpoints elsewhere. They further argue that there is potentially more risk of encountering an echo chamber in an offline environment. Take this column for instance. If you only get your technology opinions from me, then you might be setting up an echo chamber for yourself. This is why when I post my column to my website at ErinKernohan.ca, I include links to the information I consumed, so that you might draw your own conclusions about the same topic.

Right now, echo chamber is more of an accusation than a phenomenon, an assertion that no matter how much you don’t want to hear my point of view, you should have to anyway. Ironically, the term echo chamber has been used to reject perspectives from those with different lived experiences, particularly people who are marginalized and whose human rights are currently at risk, by those who want to spread anti-trans rhetoric, misogyny, and racism freely and without rebuttal.

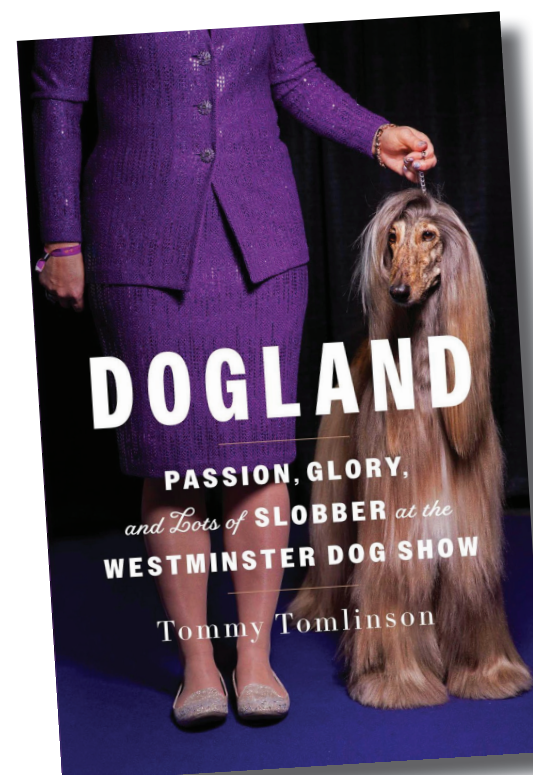
Asking social media users to stand in the firehose of every opinion on the planet will not solve the problem of confirmation bias. Rather, encouraging people to be curious and to seek a diversity of opinion that isn’t limited to hot takes in under 240 characters can help. Listening to people who cite their sources, acknowledge their own limitations, and correct their mistakes is also beneficial. If we all hold our opinions to a higher standard and allow our opinions to change when better information is presented to us, we can all better come to understand our world and each other.

Minden Memories



A black and white photo of Mountain Lake taken from Hwy 35 in winter, featuring a snowbank and fence in the foreground, with hydro poles in the midground and the lake stretching out in the background. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

HCPL’s Book of the Week



Tommy Tomlinson was watching a dog show on television a few years ago when he had a sudden thought: Are those dogs happy? How about pet dogs – are they happy? Those questions sparked a quest to venture inside the dog-show world, in search of a deeper understanding of the longtime relationship between dogs and humans. Spending three years on the road, Tomlinson goes behind the scenes at more than one hundred competitions across America.

In this surprising, entertaining and moving book Tomlinson explores the deep bond between humans and dogs, tracing its evolution, the origins of dog breeds, show dog standards, and the health challenges of purebred dogs.

Dogland by Tommy Tomlinson is available to borrow as a book or book club set from the Haliburton County Public Library.



Ice racers slide around a bend on the track at the Minden Fairgrounds. /FILE

CASC seeks ice racers for upcoming season

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

The Canadian Automobile Sports Clubs Ice Racing Division is actively seeking adventurous drivers.

“Are you a car buff that loves to drive, then Ontario Ice Racing might just be your next winter thrill,” asks Elaine Willis, promotions manager. “Ice racing has been captivating Canadian motorsport enthusiasts for over 50 years, and it’s one of the most accessible ways to enjoy racing. Held each winter in the heart of Ontario, these races combine skill, speed, and, of course, lots of ice. The best part? Getting started with your own car is easier and more affordable than you might think.”

The ice racing track is made at the Minden Fairgrounds, with thick ice being prepared by the Kin Club in a curvaceous track.

“Picture a typical racetrack but surrounded by snowbanks and sparkling with ice that tests every ounce of control a driver can muster,” says Willis. “Drivers navigate tight turns and long straightaways, constantly adjusting their grip on the frozen surface and challenging their driving skills in ways that dry pavement could never offer.”

Bryan Rashleigh, president of the British Automobile Racing Club began racing in Minden in the 70s. When his studded tires first began tearing up the ice track, it was still located at its old, swampy location. Rashleigh started ice racing in Minden every year in 1976 and will soon be approaching his 50th year. Rashleigh worked at Attrell Toyota, owned by Bob Attrell Sr., who brought Rashleigh to his first ice race.

“It was cheap and it was a lot of fun,” says Rashleigh. “You can also have a passenger with you,” says Rashleigh, when explaining how he fell into the sport of ice racing.

“You don’t need roll bars or anything like that. It’s very simple to prepare your car,” says Rashleigh. “After that, I got hooked and wanted to keep going every winter.”

“I wanted to keep going, and going, and going.”

Rashleigh is an experienced racer, having also rubber raced at Calabogie Motorsports Park, Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, and Shannonville Motorsports Park.

One of Dustin Brown’s friends invited him



Veteran ice racer Bryan Rashleigh races around the track. /FILE

out to an ice race as well.

“I rode shotgun and after that, I was hooked,” said Brown. “It was so much fun.” Brown has raced in the ice races for around 12 years and is the Director of the Ice Races for Twin Lakes Motor Club.

“Every day that I go racing, I can be fifth or first and it doesn’t matter,” said Brown.

Brown says that the best part about ice racing is that the price does not matter the most. What matters most is things like the weight of the vehicle, driving ability of the driver, windshield wipers, and your defroster.

“Choose a lighter car to start with and you’ll have success,” says Brown. “There are a lot of good people in this, a lot of good resources.” Brown, like many of the other longtime ice racers are excited to offer their experiences with racing and provide guidance to interested beginners.

“Ice racing isn’t just about speed. It’s about control, precision, and adapting to the changing conditions of the ice. The track’s surface is constantly shifting as cars race over it, polishing the ice and making it increasingly slick with every lap,” says Willis. “Drivers must stay focused and make real-time adjustments, offering a unique racing experience that keeps everyone on their toes.”

Willis outlines these steps to begin ice

racing:

“1. Choose the right car: You don’t need a high-performance sports car to participate. In fact, smaller, front-wheel-drive cars like the Honda Civic or Hyundai Accent tend to perform very well on ice. In recent years we have seen many Subaru all-wheel-drive cars as well. Rear-wheel-drive cars also have their own class and would include brands such as Toyota, BMW and Lexus. The key is ensuring the car is mechanically sound with good brakes and steering.”

“2. Join a car club and get your license: Before hitting the track, racers must have a valid provincial drivers licence, join a CASC-OR (Canadian Automobile Sport Clubs – Ontario Region) affiliated club, which is affordable, with annual dues starting at around \$40. Once you’ve joined, you’ll also need a CASC-OR C (basic) license, which can be secured online for about \$50 plus HST. These registrations facilitate the organization, registration and insurance of our events.”

“3. Prepare Your Car for the Ice: While ice racing has minimal car preparation requirements, a few simple modifications help ensure safety and improve performance. Remove any plastic trim or lights that could break and remove or deactivate airbags.

“

I rode shotgun and after that, I was hooked.

— DUSTIN BROWN, SEASONED ICE RACER

”

There are two tire choices: Tractionized winter tires (standard snow tires that have been “chewed up” to improve grip) are often used in the basic “rubber-to-ice” classes. Studded: For additional grip, some racers opt for DOT street stud tires that provide more consistent traction and you simply buy them and put them on your car.”

“4. Safety Gear is Simple: Unlike other motorsports, ice racing requires minimal safety gear. A helmet that conforms to Snell 2010M, 2015M or ECE 22.5 is essential, but no additional roll cages or additional harnesses are necessary. Just the car’s standard three-point seatbelt in working order and an approved helmet will get you started.”

“5. Sign Up for Events and Get on the Track: With car and license in hand, you’re ready for the races! Events run from mid-January through early March, weather permitting, with weekend races for \$210, (Saturday \$125 and Sunday \$85). Newcomers can even try a single-weekend event with a temporary license (\$25), letting you test the ice before committing to the whole season. Rookie driver training is also provided so that you get a few tips and tricks along with additional track time.”

For those interested in ice racing, visit the CASC’s website at www.casc.on.ca/ice-racing or email the director at iceracedir@casc.on.ca. Experienced drivers are more than happy to chat with those interested in getting into the sport. There is also a Facebook group called Ice Racing – Minden that is open to join and begin your ice racing journey.

There will be an information webinar over Zoom on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. The link for the webinar can be found on their website.

CFUW plans vigil of remembrance

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Times Staff

Do you remember where you were on Dec. 6, 35 years ago? It started as a day like any other. A cold and drizzly day in Montreal, with the sun setting early and the countdown to Christmas well underway. But as the sun set on Dec. 6, 1989, 14 women were killed at the École Polytechnique, a post-secondary institution with a focus on engineering.

The shooter separated men and women in each room - sending the men to safety while he shot down each female student who crossed his path; a blatant act of gender-fuelled violence.

This day would change the course of history as we knew it; with major shifts made across the country when it came to access to firearms, emergency response protocols, and advocacy for women in male-dominated industries.

Nora Stewart is the Vice President of the Canadian Federation of University Women Haliburton Highlands (CFUW-HH), and a retired engineer, who has recently returned to her "home" of the Haliburton Highlands. After 40 years of living in Calgary, the civil engineer made the move to the county, and is instrumental in coordinating the first vigil in dedication to the 14 women who were killed in Montreal in 1989.

"We need to pay attention to the fact that gender based violence still exists," said Stewart. "We'd like to commemorate the specific women who lost their lives to this violence, and became victims solely because of their sex."

Stewart went to school for engineering in the 1970s, and while she said that steps have been made since her time in training, the discrimination towards women is still prevalent in the industry. "There has been more awareness brought to the gender biases that exist," she noted, "but it continues today."

This is why the CFUW-HH will be hosting their first vigil on Dec. 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The ceremony is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. at the Haliburton Museum parking lot, and attendees will enter into the forest, where organizers will share the names of the 14 women murdered in the senseless killing, and take a moment of silence to remember them.

"It is common to wear a white ribbon on Dec. 6," said Stewart. "It can be worn by anyone, to symbolize the laying down of arms against gender based violence."

All are welcome to attend the memorial, and remember the women who lost their lives on this cold and drizzly day in December, 35 years ago.

Public health unit budget increases

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Public Health unit's budget for next year has a slight increase.

The health unit's 2025 budget reflects a 0.7 per cent increase over the previous year and a 2.2 per cent increase to the cost-shared budget.

The cost-shared budget reflects the provincial and municipal contributions to the unit's base budget, said Dr. Natalie Bocking, the unit's medical officer of health.

The provincial contribution increased one per cent, while municipal contributions increased five per cent.

The total spending plan entails \$22.4 million. Haliburton County's 2025 contribution toward that purse is \$666,396.

"To realize any sort of maintenance of services and also be able to continue to expand services with continued provincial priorities and introduction of programs, municipal contributions then increase at a higher rate than the provincial increase in order to do that," Bocking said.

SAFE & WELL 2

An exhibition presented by the
HHSS 9/10 Visual Arts and JDHES 7B Classes



Opening Reception Friday November 29, 4:00-5:30pm
November 29 - December 20, 2024

Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre
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railsendgallery.com
705-457-2330



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Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Haliburton Highlands Land Trust's 2024 Holiday Auction

When: Nov. 17 to Dec. 8, Online
Online fundraising auction beginning Nov. 17 and ending Dec. 8. Support our purchase and protection of the 100 acre Hadlington property in Highlands East. Register today at www.haliburtonlandtrust.ca to bid on the over 130 items generously donated by business and individual supporters.

Christmas Open House

When: Saturday Dec 7, 7 - 9 pm
Where: Red Cross Outpost Historic House, 2314 Loop Rd, Wilberforce
Come and join us for good cheer, seasonal goodies and hot apple cider.
Contact: Barb Schofield, 705-448-2598, wilberforcebarb@yahoo.ca

Highland Wind Symphony Holiday Concert

When: Sunday, December 8 at 3 p.m.
Where: Lakeside Church, Haliburton
Join us for some "Sounds of the Season" and other musical favourites at our annual
Admission Adults \$15, Family \$30. Tickets available at Master's Bookstore Haliburton or at Minden Pharmasave. Call or text 705-457-0455 for information.

Free Talk Webinar

When: Dec. 11 at 7 p.m.
Where: Zoom
Attention Women over 45! Discover easy, impactful strategies to move from feeling overwhelmed with daily tasks and frustrated

with the changes in your body, to having more time and energy for a sustainable health lifestyle with more fitness, fun and fulfillment. Join coach Karen Koehler on zoom for a dynamic 60 min webinar on Dec 11, 2024 at 7:00PM. Sign up at <https://3vitalkeys-to-strengthjoyfulfulfillment.eventbrite.ca>

Recurring events

TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly

When: Monday mornings 9:30 to 11 a.m.

Where: Haliburton Legion Branch 129, upper level

Admission: Yearly membership of \$59

A non-profit/commercial network of weight-loss support groups, offers programs for healthy living and weight management.

Bridge for Seniors

When: Mondays at 1 p.m.

Where: Haliburton Legion - Schofield Room

All welcome

Haliburton Legion Walking Group

When: Mondays at 9 to 10 a.m.

Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
A safe walking environment. Lead by an Occupational therapist.

Free Balanced Fitness and Active Social Senior Classes

When: Every second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 10 to 11 a.m.

Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All seniors are welcome. Group led by Registered Recreation Therapist

OPP investigate fatal motor vehicle collision

Members of the Haliburton Highlands Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Dysart Fire Department and Haliburton County Paramedics (EMS) responded to a two-vehicle motor vehicle in Haliburton, resulting in one fatality.

On Dec. 2, at approximately 2:36 p.m., Haliburton Highlands OPP received report of a serious two-vehicle collision on Highway 118 near Shamba Trail. The Dysart Fire Department was already on scene upon po-

lice arrival. A passenger vehicle and pickup truck with lone drivers were involved in the collision.

An 87-year-old female was transported to a local hospital where she was pronounced as deceased.

The driver of the pickup truck was transported to a local hospital with minor injuries.

Roads remained closed for several hours while emergency crews, including the OPP Central Region Traffic Incident Management

Enforcement (TIME) team, processed the scene. The highway was re-opened at approximately 8:36 p.m.

The investigation is ongoing. Anyone who may have witnessed or has video/dash camera footage of the collision and has not spoken with police is asked to contact the Haliburton Highlands OPP Detachment at 1-888-310-1122.

To serve our province by protecting its citizens, upholding the law and preserving

public safety.

Haliburton Highlands OPP values your contribution to building safe communities. If you have information about suspected unlawful activity, please visit Crime Stoppers at: stopcrimehere.ca or call 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Submitted

OPP respond to 10 minor weather-related collisions

The Haliburton Highlands Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) responded to 10 minor collisions over the weekend due to the first significant snowfall of 2024.

Between Nov. 29, at approximately 5 p.m., and Dec. 2, at approximately 6 a.m., officers responded to 10 collisions on Haliburton County roadways. There were no injuries as a result of these minor collisions.

Near-freezing temperatures and heavy snowfall is a key factor in winter collisions. Members of the Haliburton Highlands OPP would like to remind motorists to be prepared for winter driving:

Conduct a maintenance check on your vehicle's equipment such as windshield wipers, washer fluid level, windshield defrost fan function and tire condition for winter driving.

Stock up your winter survival kit in your vehicle with items such as: blanket, candles, flashlight, extra prescription medication, fully charged cell phone, snacks and any other supplies needed for unexpected winter travel problems.

Stay alert to winter conditions which can change quickly, placing extra demands on your vehicle and driving skills. Drive according to the weather conditions, your ability, and allow extra travel time.

Check the Ministry of Transportation traveller website prior to heading out for roadway traffic, snowplow locations (Track My Plow), and surface conditions at www.ontario.ca/511.

Submitted

HHSS presents: *Circus Olympus*

HHSS's senior drama class presented *Circus Olympus* on Nov. 28, 29, and 30. The play presented Greek mythology in a comedic and entertaining fashion. /TIM YANO Staff photographer



Help them break the silence of abuse and move forward on their healing journey.

You can help the YWCA provide life-changing services to women and children escaping abuse and domestic violence.



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Crisis Line: 705-286-6442



YWCA
PETERBOROUGH
HALIBURTON



Singing for the snow

Boreal presented Songs for the Snow Season at the Minden Hills United Church on Nov. 29. The event was organized by Abbey Gardens. /TIM YANO Staff photographer



RADIO WITH CHARACTER

Cathy MacIlmurray
Well known Community Volunteer &
Host of After Nine on Wednesdays
9-11am

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RADIO BINGO EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT





Home Game


VS


Saturday, Dec. 14 - 4 p.m.

Upcoming Home Games



**Saturday, Dec. 21
4 p.m.**



**Sunday, Dec. 29
4 p.m.**

S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena
For more information please visit our website
WWW.HUSKIESHOCKEY.CA



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fundraising
campaign
2024

sirch.on.ca/donate



For the Good of Haliburton County

What is SIRCH?

Our Mission

to identify community needs and barriers and develop solutions through inspiration, innovation and partnerships.

Our Vision

to provide a thriving community where everyone feels connected and supported.



Hello Haliburton County,

We are all concerned about our neighbours who are struggling right now. These are tough times. Many people we see every day do not have enough food to feed their families. And people who are alone, ill, frail, precariously housed, disabled, or depressed may need prepared meals. That's one of the things we do at SIRCH.

SIRCH has a simple way you can have an immediate impact on those who need help the most. Since 2020, SIRCH's Community Kitchen has made and given out over 86,000 healthy meals – all funded entirely by donations.

Our goal this year is to give out 1,600 meals each month, free, to residents in Haliburton County and North Hastings who are struggling and hungry.

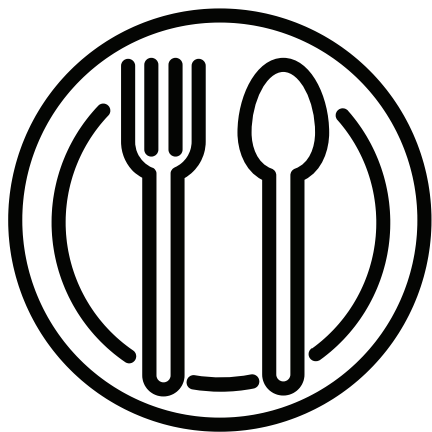
Please give a donation during our Gifts from the Heart fundraiser. It will make an immediate and measurable difference!

Gena Robertson
Founding Executive Director,
SIRCH Community
Services

"Last night I skipped dinner so my daughter could eat"

"Without the help of SIRCH meals, we wouldn't be eating this week"

Last year, because of your generosity, SIRCH gave out 16,800 free nutritious meals.



"SIRCH steps up when there's nothing available to meet the need"

SIRCH meals are funded entirely by donations!

Please Donate What You Can...

- sirch.on.ca/donate
- scan the QR Code
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- Call: 705-457-1742



Turn up the heat for Places for People

Every degree makes a difference
Places For People announces its 2024 holiday fund raising campaign.

Stuck for an idea on what to get for that special person on your list? Looking for that meaningful gift that won't end up in a landfill? We maintain our properties in the most economical way possible giving our tenants a safe and secure home with the most efficient appliances we can provide, a win for us and the environment. Beginning Dec. 1, you can purchase a degree.

The 'Turn Up The Heat for Places For People' campaign sprung up from the realization that we must replace an ancient oil furnace in one of our properties. The unexpected cost is \$8450. Add that new purchase to the cost to keep the heat and lights on in our units last year and the bill comes to nearly \$40,000.

While our tenants pay rent that incorporates some of those costs, there is still a deficit at the end of the day. We need your help to ensure we can continue to operate and everyone stays warm this winter and beyond.

Last year through the generosity of Haliburton County residents, full and part time, you helped replace windows in one of

our properties. Together, we raised \$13,000 which went a long way to helping that project become a reality.

The goal for this holiday season is to surpass that total and raise \$15,000 by Dec. 31. \$200 will buy you a full degree or you can purchase a portion of a degree for less. Our aim is to 'Turn Up The Heat' to 72 Fahrenheit (room temperature).

Places For People now owns and operates 20 affordable units throughout Haliburton County without the support of government grants. Maintaining those properties and supporting our tenants is a daunting task but one we are proud to take on.

Follow our Facebook and Instagram pages throughout the month of December to see our progress as we 'Turn Up The Heat for Places For People' because every degree makes a difference.

You can purchase degrees through Canada Helps by going to our website placesforpeople.ca

For more information please contact Sherry Lawr, sherry@placesforpeople.ca 416-888-3867.

Submitted

Caring grandparents, don't act too quickly!

Grandparent or emergency scams are common scams that target loving grandparents, taking advantage of their emotions to rob them of their money.

Fraudsters are targeting seniors by calling and pretending to be a family member in distress, the police or a justice official claiming that a loved one or grandchild is in trouble and needs money immediately. In other cases, the scammer will pretend to be an old neighbour or a family friend in trouble. Common misfortunes include having been in a car accident, getting locked up in jail, or trouble returning home from a foreign country.

The caller will ask you questions, getting you to reveal personal information. They'll also swear you to secrecy, saying that they are embarrassed and don't want other family members to find out what's happened. A scam call commonly starts as follows:

Victim: Hello?
Suspect: Hi Grandma/Nonna/Oma (depending on last name on Canada411 or potential accent).
Victim: Johnny? Is that you?
Suspect: Yes, it's Johnny. Grandma, my voice sounds different because I have a cold. Grandma, can you keep a secret? I really don't want my parents to know. I'm so scared and I need help.
Victim: Ok... What's going on? Are you okay?
Suspect: My friend picked me up to take

me to the store and we were in his brother's car... (story about a car accident or other misfortune) and now I'm in jail and they won't let me out...

If you receive a suspicious call, remember: Be suspicious of calls that require immediate action. Hang up and contact the family member directly.

The caller either doesn't provide a normal jail location for the area if asked or mistakes the local police service. Call the non-emergency number of the police service to verify the story or confirm the name and badge number of the officer calling.

When at the bank, tell the truth about why you're taking out large sums of cash as bank tellers are very familiar with scams.

The courts won't ask for cash to bail out someone in custody and will require people to be present in court.

Never send cash, cryptocurrencies or any other funds to unknown person, unverified addresses or bank accounts.

Take time to verify the story by asking the caller a few personal questions or pressing your caller for details. Scammers are counting on you wanting to quickly help your loved one in an emergency.

If you believe you have been scammed, contact your local police and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or antifraudcentre.ca.

Submitted

Sudoku brought to you by



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		2			9	8	7	5
				8	3			2
4	7						3	
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						2		4
	9			1				
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					7			

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 15

studio ROOF

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THE WOLF MOON

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Pay-what-you-can singing lessons gives back

by EMILY STONEHOUSE
Times Staff

Music should be for everyone.

That's the belief that Lauren Margison carries with her through life. It's with this in mind, that the professional singer has launched pay-what-you-can singing lessons for anyone interested in Haliburton County. "Learning to use one's voice to the best of one's ability shouldn't be exclusively for those pursuing singing professionally," said Margison. "Singing is a proven mood booster, and with a solid vocal technique, the act of singing becomes all the more rewarding."

Margison has been tied to the Haliburton Highlands for most of her life; having cottaged here with her family as a child, and eventually gracing the stage with the Highlands Opera Studio into adulthood. She holds a Masters in Music from the University of Montreal, and is a graduate of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble and the Atelier Lyrique of the Opera de Montréal. "I grew up surrounded by music," she said, "and my love of music and singing has extended to a love of teaching."

While opera runs through her veins, Margison's musical background was mostly focused around jazz, pop, and folk. She is well-versed in all styles and formats of music, and believes that in order to thrive in any one genre, all you need is a passion for singing. "Voice lessons are for everyone," she said.

"From those who are interested in pursuing singing as a career, to those that simply love music and want to learn more about how to produce their voices in a way that gives them more enjoyment when singing along to their favourite artist, and all others in between."

The lessons will be a hybrid model - partly in-person and partly over Zoom. "I am a working professional singer and



Lauren Margison, local singer now offers lessons at pay-what-you-can pricing to increase accessibility to music. Offering lessons over Zoom removes hurdles such as transportation. /Submitted

that means that I'm not always able to be present in the region," said Margison, "but I have found a great deal of success with online coachings."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, like many others, Margison utilized Zoom to both teach and be taught. She noted that by offering an online option for teaching, it has the potential to break down hurdles that distance and transportation could present.

Each lesson starts with a consultation, said Margison, who uses the time to get a sense of the student's voice, as well as their singing goals. This also helps her assess the trajectory of the student, and figure out ways she can help them best attain

their singing goals.

The pay-what-you-can singing lessons are available for anyone over the age of 14, and who resides in Haliburton County. To book a lesson, email lauren@highlandsoperastudio.com.

Margison said she is thrilled to be giving back in some capacity, to the community that has helped raise her from the age of 10. "I really consider myself a product of Haliburton County," she said. "Incredibly formative days have been spent in this gorgeous place, and it is an honour to me to give back to a place that has given me so much joy."



County of Haliburton Notice Election of County Warden

The Council of the County of Haliburton wishes to provide PUBLIC NOTICE that the 2025 Warden's Election will take place on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 commencing at 4:00 p.m. in the County Administration Building located at 11 Newcastle Street in Minden. The public is welcome to attend.

Gary Dyke, CAO/County Clerk
11 Newcastle Street
P. O. Box 399
Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0
Telephone: (705) 286-1333
or 1-866-886-8815
Fax: (705) 286-4829



A spectrum of ovum

A spectrum of local eggs show the variety of colours they can come in. /Submitted by Lavdeep Jallandhra



NOTICE Fees and Charges

NOTICE is hereby provided that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands intends to consider amending Comprehensive Fees and Charges By-Law at its regular meeting to be held on Thursday, December 12, 2024.

The meeting will be held in the Council Chambers located at 1123 North Shore Road, Algonquin Highlands, ON.

Dated: December 4, 2024

Dawn Newhook
Clerk/Deputy CAO
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Rd.
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
T: 705-489-2379 Ext. 333
E: dnewhook@algonquinhighlands.ca

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS PUBLIC SURVEY

Are you a resident of Kawartha Lakes or Haliburton County?

The Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Ontario Health Team is a collaboration of health and social care providers working to improve health access and outcomes in our community and wants to hear from you!

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Minden Times

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650 OBITUARIES



In Loving Memory of
Ronald Martin Clark

Passed away peacefully at Extendicare, Lakefield on Saturday, November 30, 2024, with his family by his side, at the age of 90.

Beloved husband of the late Kathleen (nee Barlow) (1997) and the late Nerina Rogers (nee Aishford) (2019). Loving father of Philip (Lori-Ann), Andrew (deceased-2024), Eileen (Bill) Plowman, and Laura (Terry) Robertson. Dear grandpa of Megan, Cole and Dalton. Predeceased by his sister Lucille Brooks. Ron will be greatly missed by many nieces, nephews, family and friends.

A Memorial Service to Celebrate Ron's Life will be held at the Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St., Minden on Saturday, December 7, 2024 at 1:00 pm. Reception to follow at the church (downstairs). Cremation has taken place.

Memorial Donations to the Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre or the Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Association Inc. would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



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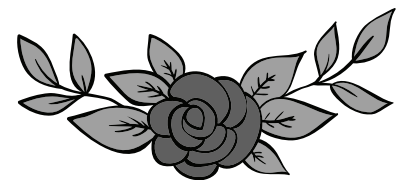
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Santa calls on HHHS

Christmas has arrived early for Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) Board. The pre-Christmas surprise was delivered in the form of an announcement from the Ministry of Health of an infusion of almost \$200,000 into the board's operating budget.

The additional funding is being made under two separate programs. The first, \$99,292, has been allocated to the Health Services Board for transitional purposes. According to the provincial press release, the government has recognized that the restructuring which hospitals have been undergoing has resulted in a number of exceptional costs and expenses. The need for the additional support was identified by a special body established to advise the government on extraordinary needs of hospitals as a result of the restructuring process. Some \$100 million has been allocated for this purpose across the province.

HHHS board Chair Hugh Nichol was pleased with the announcement. "Basically it buys us another year," Nichol stated referring to the impact on this year's deficit, which was predicted to be \$125,000. "This is a relief...it brings us one year closer to completing the capital works and realizing the efficiencies that these new facilities will bring us."

Nichol noted that since taking over the two hospitals, the operating budget has been cut by 11%. He pointed out that similar cuts have been imposed across the province and that most hospitals were 'hurting'. "We haven't been alone in this," he added.

In this regard, the chair said he wasn't sure if the transitional funding represented a one time infusion or if it was a recognition of the under-funding experienced by hospitals across the province.

For the moment however, he is pleased. "We can continue to operate with the current level of services at both sites and that is what is most important to the people of the area," he concluded.

Since its incorporation three and a half years ago, the Health Services Board has carried a deficit in its annual operating budget. The board has been reluctant to eliminate the deficit since it would mean the reduction of core or front line services. Also, be-

(more on page 4)



Stanhope visitor

Santa Claus made an early visit on Saturday much to the delight of Stanhope area children. The jolly man of the season stopped by the Stanhope Community Christmas party sponsored by the township's fire department. One of many to spend a moment on Santa's knee, Kerran Chambers and Santa exchanged meaningful glances and gifts before they bid each other greetings for the holiday season.

Board and teachers reach tentative settlement

The Trillium Lakelands District School Board and the secondary school teachers of the district reached a tentative two year contract agreement. The agreement was announced December 10 following nonstop bargaining sessions.

The two parties held lengthy meetings in Lindsay from December eighth to the tenth, in order to hammer out the tentative settlement. The teachers and the school board have been in dispute since mid-September, with the contentious issue of teaching time being at the centre of the disagreement. The teachers, members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation district 15, have been without a

contract and in a legal strike action since August.

"The news is good," said Cheryl Murdoch, chair of the Trillium Lakelands District School Board. "We are hoping that after the holidays, everything can get back to normal."

Murdoch said that students should feel relieved as tension between teachers and the board lessens, especially after the Haliburton Highlands Secondary School student protest of December 2. "It was the grade 12 and OAC students I felt sorry for. They, of all the groups, were worried about the results of this," said Murdoch.

If the tentative agreement is ratified, it is expected that many of the

extra-curricular activities which have been missing from the school schedule will resume after the Christmas break. The teachers withdrew their involvement in all but their instructional responsibilities as a protest during the contract dispute.

Ratification meetings are expected to be held this week. Details about the agreement have not been released, but additional information is expected next week. Teachers will be meeting in Gravenhurst to review the tentative settlement, with a vote to be held on Thursday. If the teachers ratify the new contract, the school board will hold a special board meeting by the end of the week to add their approval.

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